

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### Middlesex Water Company Has Levels of Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) Above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently violated a New Jersey drinking water standard, and as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of federal and state regulated drinking water contaminants. New Jersey adopted a standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for PFOA in 2020 and monitoring began in 2021. The MCL for PFOA is 14 parts per trillion (ppt) and is based on a running annual average (RAA), in which the four most recent quarters of monitoring data are averaged. On September 7, 2021, we received notice that the sample collected on August 2, 2021 showed that our system exceeds the PFOA MCL. PFOA was found at 36.1 ppt which caused the RAA to exceed the MCL regardless of the next quarter results.

#### What is PFOA?

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) is a member of the group of chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), used as a processing aid in the manufacture of fluoropolymers used in non-stick cookware and other products, as well as other commercial and industrial uses, based on its resistance to harsh chemicals and high temperatures. PFOA has also been used in aqueous film-forming foams for firefighting and training, and it is found in consumer products such as stain-resistant coatings for upholstery and carpets, water-resistant outdoor clothing, and greaseproof food packaging. Major sources of PFOA in drinking water include discharge from industrial facilities where it was made or used and the release of aqueous film-forming foam. Although the use of PFOA has decreased substantially, contamination is expected to continue indefinitely because it is extremely persistent in the environment and is soluble and mobile in water.

#### What does this mean?

*\*People who drink water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time could experience problems with their blood serum cholesterol levels, liver, kidney, immune system, or, in males, the reproductive system. Drinking water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time may also increase the risk of testicular and kidney cancer. For females, drinking water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time may cause developmental delays in a fetus and/or an infant. Some of these developmental effects may persist through childhood.*

*\* For specific health information, see*

*[https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas\\_drinking%20water.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas_drinking%20water.pdf).*

(over)

### **What should I do?**

- If you have specific health concerns, a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at higher risk than other individuals and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.
- The New Jersey Department of Health advises that infant formula and other beverages for infants, such as juice, should be prepared with bottled water when PFOA is elevated in drinking water.
- Pregnant, nursing, and women considering having children may choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOA.
- Other people may also choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOA or a home water filter that is certified to reduce levels of PFOA. Home water treatment devices are available that can reduce levels of PFOA. For more specific information regarding the effectiveness of home water filters for reducing PFOA, visit the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International website, <http://www.nsf.org/>.
- Boiling your water will not remove PFOA.

For more information, see <https://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pfas/>

### **What is being done?**

Middlesex Water Company has been monitoring the levels of PFAS compounds for a number of years. We have been reporting on PFOA detection in our Annual Consumer Confidence Report sent to you since 2008. In anticipation of New Jersey regulatory standards, we began evaluating treatment options in 2019. Design of a new treatment plant which will remove additional compounds, including PFOA, was completed and is under construction. The new treatment plant is expected to be in service in 2023.

Only a portion of our service area, served by the Company's Park Avenue Treatment Plant is affected by this public notice. This notice is being distributed to only those customers who, according to our records, may at times, receive all or some of their water from that facility. The impacted municipalities are South Plainfield, Edison, Metuchen, Woodbridge, Clark and Rahway. Some portions of these municipalities may be affected, please see the map illustrating the affected area on our website at <https://www.middlesexwater.com/water-quality/>

For more information, please contact our Customer Service Department at 800-549-3802.

*\*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.\**

This notice is being sent to you by Middlesex Water Company. State Water System ID#1225001

Date distributed: October 22, 2021